

Navigating the DC Public Education Landscape



OFFICE OF THE
STUDENT
ADVOCATE



What We Do

The Office of the Student Advocate supports students, parents, and families in their advocacy through parent education, one-on-one coaching, resource supports, and trainings in order to amplify the voices of families and communities in processes and decision-making; to provide avenues for access to resources and understanding systems; and to support power families and communities already possess.



How We Do

We work in partnership to equalize the balance of power between families and schools by increasing family voice, access, and power in our system of public education. We achieve this goal by ensuring families are connected to resources and supports, informed of their rights, and understand how the system works.

Requests for Assistance

Operates live Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm to answer questions and concerns regarding public education in DC.

Trainings & Events

Workshops to give you the advocacy tools you need.

Resources & Guides

From referrals to discipline guides, we've got you covered with the information you need to make decisions about your student's education.

Community Engagement

We ground our work in what YOU need.



Understanding the DC Governance Structure

While the structure of the city is complex, the choices individual parents make for their child's educational journey is impacted by the structure.

Understanding how government works is vital. Making the system work for you and understanding how to engage with each of the key players is essential.

The Purpose

To make the process of public education and government less mysterious

The Goal

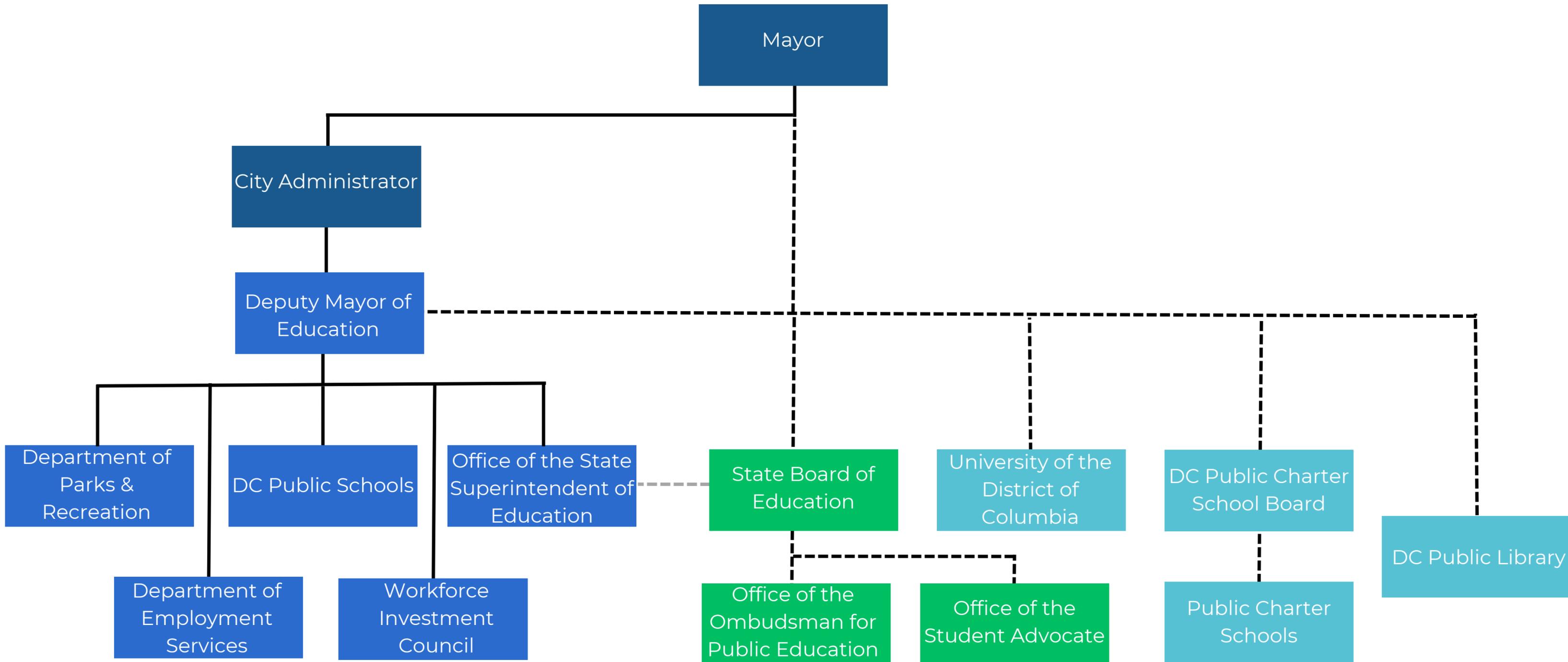
To create a roadmap for advocacy

Top Level Governance



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The Public Education Governance Structure



Entities connected by dashed lines are independent agencies or entities. They appear on this organizational chart in proximity to the Executive Branch cluster with which their functions most align.

In DC, we have mayoral control of schools.

The Mayor's control over public schools is not equal.

§ 38–172. Mayor's authority; rulemaking.

(a) The Mayor shall govern the public schools in the District of Columbia. The Mayor shall have authority over all curricula, operations, functions, budget, personnel, labor negotiations and collective bargaining agreements, facilities, and other education-related matters, but shall endeavor to keep teachers in place after the start of the school year and transfer teachers, if necessary, during summer break.

(b) The Mayor may delegate any of his authority to a designee as he or she determines is warranted for efficient and sound administration and to further the purpose of DCPS to educate all students enrolled within its schools or learning centers consistent with District-wide standards of academic achievement.

Source: § 38–172, Code of the District of Columbia, <https://beta.code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/sections/38-172.html>



Mayor Muriel Bowser

Essentially, the Mayor has control over DC Public Schools.

Mayoral Control of Schools

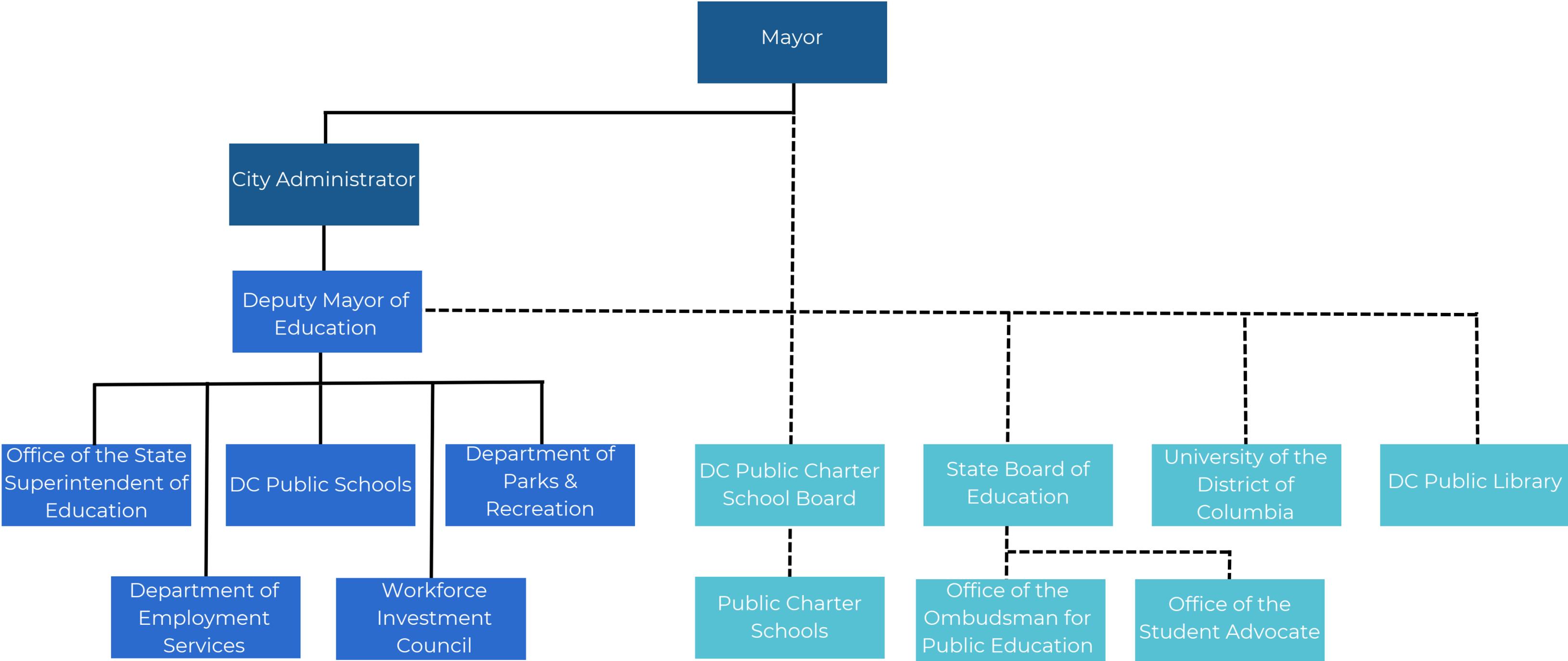
“School districts are traditionally controlled by a locally elected school board, which makes decisions about how schools are run, including hiring and firing the...[Chancellor of DCPS]. Mayoral control, however, is a shift in the power structure wherein mayors are given a greater degree of authority over schools.”

TABLE 1
Complete and mixed models of mayoral governance: Selected city examples in 2013

District	Mayor appoints majority of board?	Mayor appoints all of board?	Mayor has full appointive power?
Complete governance			
Boston	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process
Chicago	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cleveland	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process
Hartford	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Haven	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes	No	Yes
Providence	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process and city council approval
Washington, D.C.	Full mayoral authority		
Mixed models			
Baltimore	Joint appointment with governor		
Philadelphia	Joint appointment with governor		

In recent years, some cities, including Boston and Chicago, have scaled back mayoral control in favor of majority or fully elected school boards.

The Public Education Governance Structure



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The Mayor's Education Designee

Who is the Deputy Mayor for Education?



Deputy Mayor
Paul Kihn

Deputy Mayor for Education is the Mayor's designee responsible for developing and implementing the Mayor's vision for academic excellence and creating a high quality education continuum from birth to 24 (from early childhood to K-12 to post-secondary and the workforce).

§ 38–191. Department of Education; establishment; authority

“...responsible for the planning, coordination, and supervision of all public education and education-related activities under its jurisdiction, including development and support of programs to improve the delivery of educational services and opportunities, from early childhood to the post-secondary education level, including the District of Columbia Public Schools, public charter schools...”

“Promote, coordinate, and oversee collaborative efforts among District government agencies to support education and child development as it relates to education, including coordinating the integration of programs and resources...”

School Structures



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Schools

Roles Within the Building

Roles & Responsibilities of Teachers

- planning & preparing lessons
- managing classroom behaviors
- assessing/evaluating student learning
- identifying difficulties and learning problems

Roles & Responsibilities of Administrators

- shaping a vision of academic success for all students
- creating a climate hospitable to education
- cultivating leadership in others
- managing people, data, and processes
- improving school leadership

What's the Difference?

DC Public Schools

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is the traditional system of public schools in the District. DCPS is a system of neighborhood, matter-of-right schools, with some selective school options, and is required to serve all students in DC.

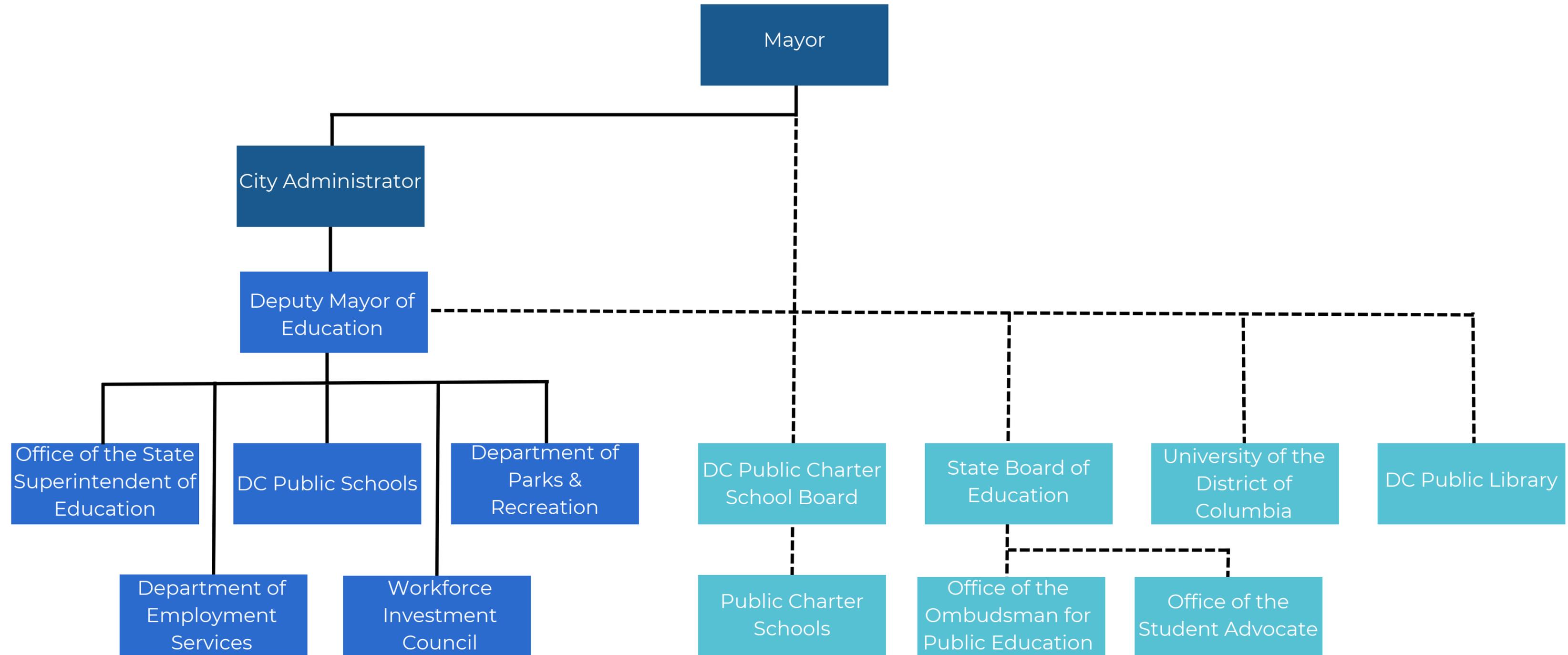
As a DC government agency, DCPS is under direct mayoral control and is subject to DC Council performance and budget oversight.

Public Charter Schools

Charter schools are independent public schools that are free to innovate and are held accountable for student performance. They are publicly funded, tuition-free, and nonsectarian. Like traditional public schools, they are open to all DC residents and receive public funds according to how many students are enrolled.

A public charter school exercises exclusive control over its expenditures, administration, personnel, and instructional methods. While the DC Public Charter School Board, an independent DC government agency, is subject to some mayoral and DC Council oversight, the exclusive control individual charter LEAs have means they are not under the direct control, or oversight, of the mayor or the DC Council.

How Schools Connect to Top Level Structures



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Local Education Agencies (LEAs)



“...a public authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.”

Source: Definitions, U.S. Department of Education. <https://www.ed.gov/race-top/district-competition/definitions>

DC Public Schools (DCPS) & individual public charter networks are local education agencies or school districts.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

We essentially have 65 plus school districts in the District of Columbia. Each of the school districts, or LEAs, has their own policies and procedures.

DCPS has policies and procedures which are subject to our city regulations, code, and significant governmental oversight.

Public Charter Schools have the autonomy to create their own policies, with some considerations from DC Public Charter School Board or OSSE guidance.



Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

DCPS Senior Leadership Team

Roles & Responsibilities of the Chancellor

- central authority of DCPS, the traditional public school system in the district
- delegates authority of education programs to the Deputy Chancellor for Social Emotional Academic Development and the Chief of Elementary Schools and Chief of Secondary Schools

Roles & Responsibilities of the Chief of Schools

- delegates oversight of individual schools to Instructional Superintendents

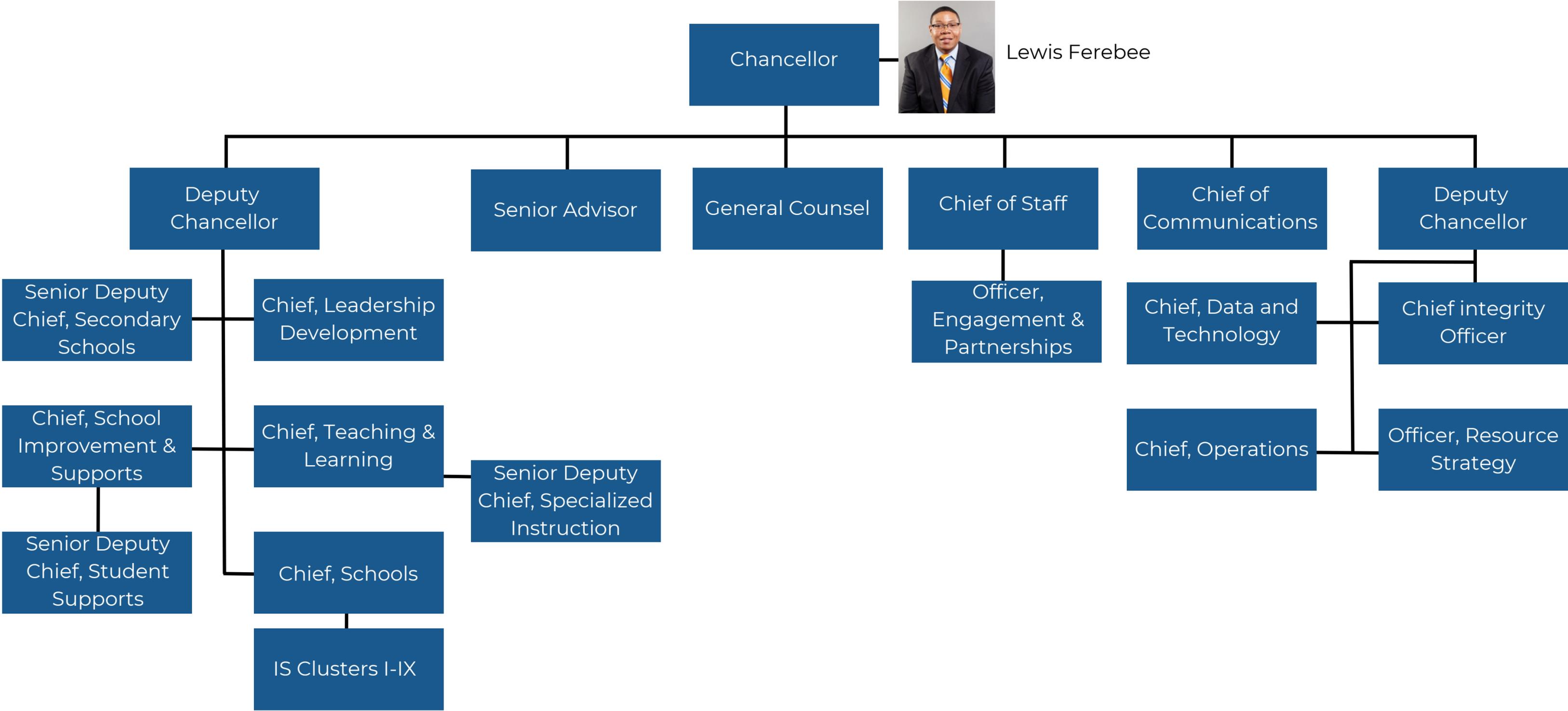
Roles & Responsibilities of Instructional Superintendents

- manages clusters of individual schools



Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

DCPS Core Leadership Team



Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

Public Charter School Networks

Public charter school networks have different structure and leadership roles as they operate as their own LEA.

Some networks consist of one campus (e.g., Girls Global Academy, DC Bilingual) while others have multiple (e.g., KIPP, DC Prep, Friendship).

Each network has a board of trustees in addition to a head of school or executive director. For more information on individual networks, please visit dcpcsb.org/find-a-school.

School Governing Agencies



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Public Charter School Board (PCSB)

PCSB authorizes public charter schools in DC. After the comprehensive application process and approval of a public charter school's charter, PCSB provides oversight and support to the schools it authorizes.

The DC Public Charter School Board is governed by a seven-member Board, nominated by the Mayor, with the advice and consent of the DC Council. The volunteer Board approves new schools, provides oversight to schools while in operation, and revokes a school's charter if they fail to meet their performance goals.

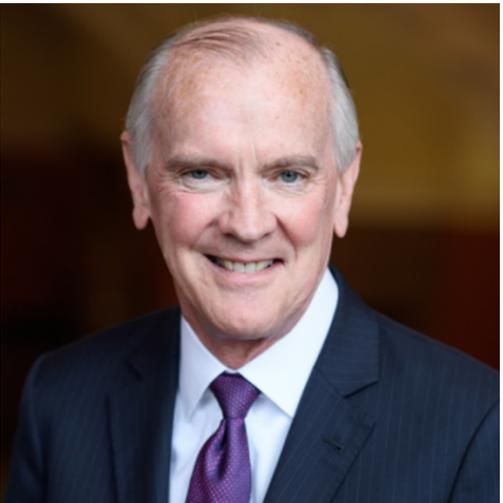
The members of the Board delegates its power to run the daily functions of PCSB to the Executive Director, Dr. Michelle J. Walker-Davis.



Public Charter School Board Members



Chair
Lea Crusey



Vice Chair
Jim Sandman



Secretary
Ricarda Ganjam



Board Member
Shukurat Adamoh-Faniyan



Board Member
Nick Rodriguez



Treasurer
Shantelle Wright

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)



OSSE is the state education agency for the District of Columbia. OSSE sets statewide policies, provides resources and support, and exercises accountability for all public education in DC. Provides information, policy guidance, and resources on education matters to local education agencies (LEAs) and parents.

The State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Christina Grant, leads the work of the DC state education agency (OSSE).

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE): Oversight

- Adult and Family Education
- Assessment and Accountability
- Credit Flexibility – Waiver to Award Competency-Based Unit(s)
- DC ReEngagement Center
- Early Learning
 - Provides leadership and coordination to ensure that all District of Columbia children, from birth to kindergarten entrance, have access to high quality early childhood development programs and are well prepared for school
- Educator Licensure & Accreditation
- Elementary & Secondary Education
- Grants Management and Compliance
- Higher Education Licensure Commission
- Wellness and Nutrition Services
- Postsecondary Education
 - includes DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG) and DC Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (DCLEAP).

- Public Charter School Financing & Support
 - Manages several federally funded programs for public charter school facility financing.
- Race to the Top
- Special Education Transportation (DOT)
- Specialized Education
 - Provides the public with access to information about special education related services, approved placements and direct on line connections to helpful documents.
- Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED)
 - single, comprehensive repository of student and education-related data needed to improve education planning, management, reporting, instruction and evaluation.
- Office of Dispute Resolution

DC State Board of Education



The Public Education Amendment Act of 2007 enacted mayoral control. This shift made DCPS an agency under the mayor rather than under management of SBOE.

The State Board of Education is responsible for advising the State Superintendent of Education on educational matters and approving state-level policies.

DC State Board of Education (SBOE)

State Level Policies Under SBOE Approval

- State academic standards
- High school graduation requirements
- Standards for high school equivalence credentials
- State definitions of "adequate yearly progress" and "proficiency" that will be applied to all LEAs
- State definition and standards for "highly qualified teachers"
- Standards for accreditation and certification of teacher preparation programs of colleges and universities
- The state accountability plan pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act
- State policies for parental involvement
- State policies for supplemental education service providers

- The rules for residency verification
- The list of charter school accreditation organizations
- The categories and format of the annual report card, pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act
- The list of private placement accreditation organizations, pursuant to Uniform Per Student Funding Formula for Public Schools and Public Charter Schools and Tax Conformity Clarification Amendment Act of 1998;
- Approve state rules for enforcing school attendance requirements
- Approve state standards for home schooling

DC State Board of Education Members



Eboni-Rose Thompson
President, Ward 7



Frazier O'Leary
Vice President, Ward 4



Jaque Patterson
At-Large, 2021-2025



Ben Williams
Ward 1, 2023-2027



Allister Chang
Ward 2, 2021-2025



Eric Gulet
Ward 3, 2023-2027



Robert Henderson
Ward 5, 2023-2027



Brandon Best
Ward 6, 2023-2027



Carlene Reid
Ward 8, 2021-2025

SY 2022-2023 SBOE Student Representatives



Liv Birnstad



China Jones-Burgess



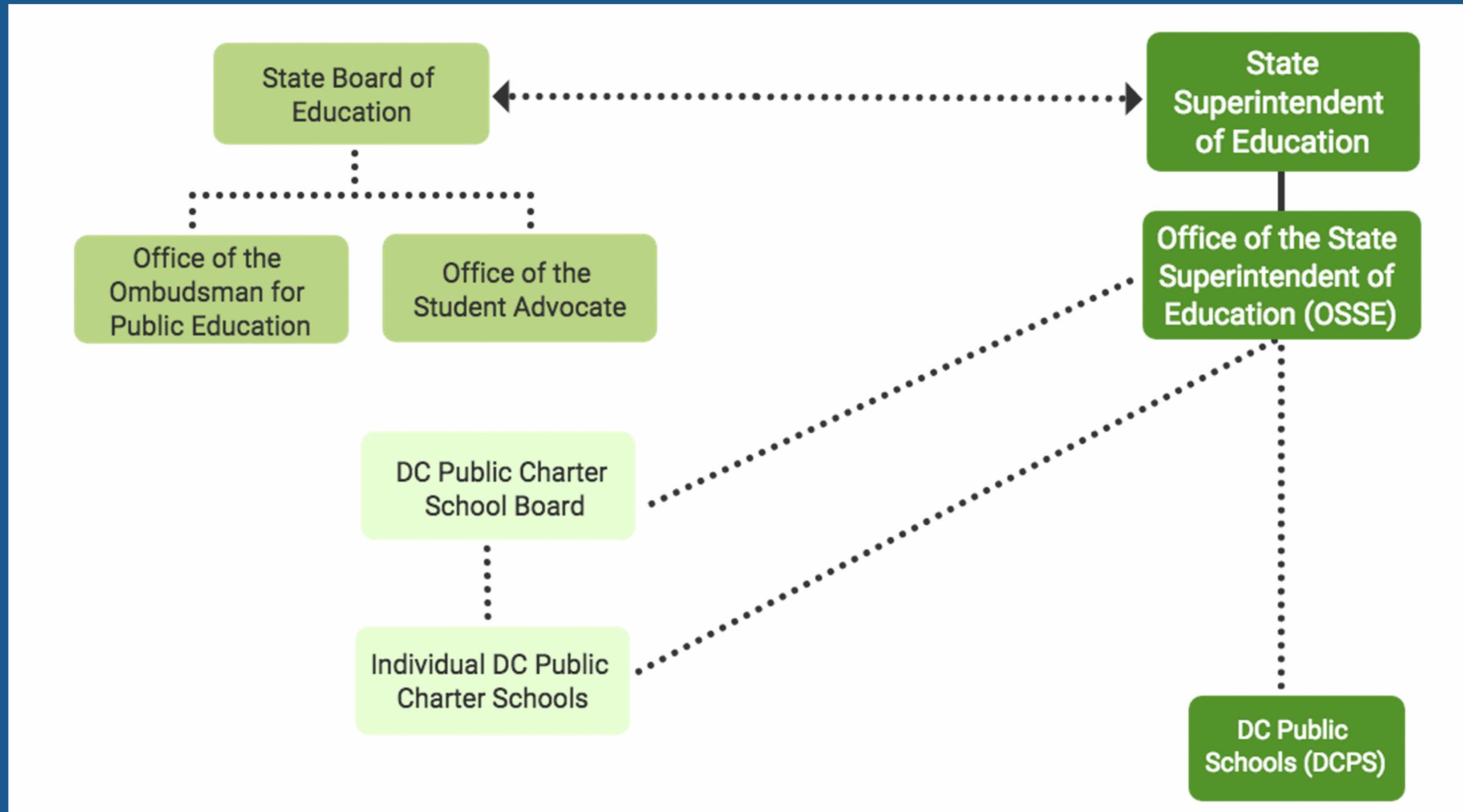
Anthony Wages



Téa Washington



Relationship Between OSSE & SBOE



The Council of the District of Columbia

As the central and chief policy-making body for the District of Columbia, the Council's mission is to provide strong, innovative and effective leadership for the benefit of residents across the city. The Council's central role as a legislative body is to make laws and is responsible for the oversight of multiple agencies, commissions, boards and other instruments of District government. The Council also plays a critical role in maintaining a balanced budget and the fiscal health of the District of Columbia government.



The John A. Wilson Building - the District Government Building

The Council of the District of Columbia



At -Large Councilmember
Kenyan R. McDuffie



At -Large Councilmember
Anita Bonds



At -Large Councilmember
Robert C. White



At -Large Councilmember
Christina Henderson



Ward 1 Councilmember
Brianne K. Nadeau



Ward 2 Councilmember
Brooke Pinto



Ward 3 Councilmember
Matthew Frumin



Ward 4 Councilmember
Janeese Lewis George



Ward 5 Councilmember
Zachary Parker



Ward 6 Councilmember
Charles Allen



Ward 7 Councilmember
Vincent C. Gray



Ward 8 Councilmember
Trayon White, Sr.



Chairman
Phil Mendelson

The Council of the District of Columbia, which is led by the Council Chairman, has 13 members.

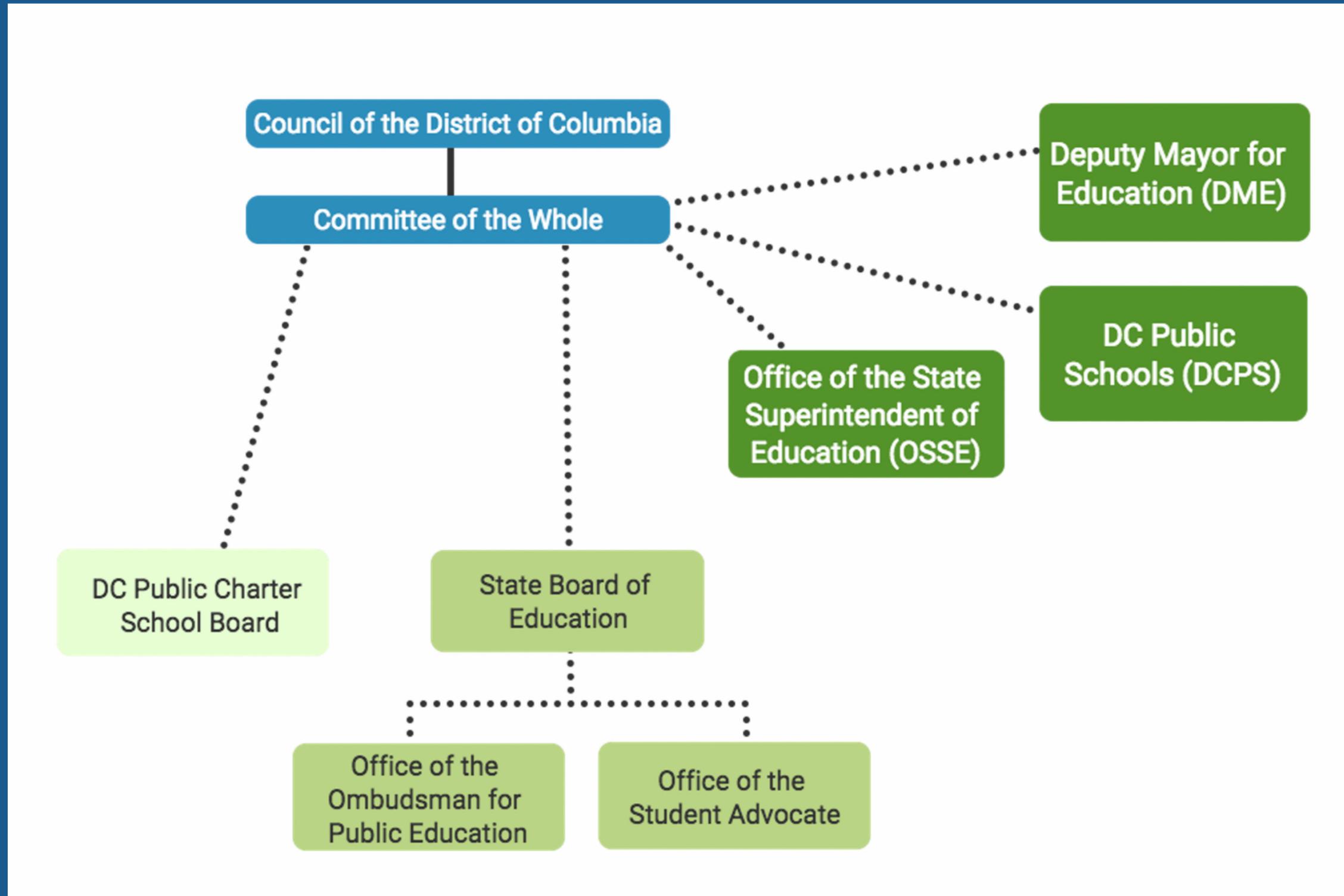
DC Council: How it Works

Council committees review the performance of government programs and agencies to ensure they are serving their established purposes and operating under pertinent regulations and budget targets. Public education falls under review of the Committee of the Whole (COW).

Education Related Agencies Under COW

- Commission and Office on Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes
- Commission on the Arts and Humanities
- Community Schools Advisory Committee
- Department of Buildings
- District of Columbia Education Research Practice Partnership Review Panel
- District of Columbia Educational Opportunity for Military Children State Council
- District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
- District of Columbia Public Schools
- District of Columbia Retirement Board, including the District of Columbia Police Officers and Fire Fighters' Retirement Fund and the Teachers' Retirement Fund
- District of Columbia State Athletics Commission
- District Retiree Health Contribution
- Healthy Youth and Schools Commission
- Higher Education Licensure Commission
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
- Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education (including Advisory Panel on Special Education, Early Childhood Development Coordinating Council)
- Office of the Student Advocate
- Public Charter School Credit Enhancement Fund Committee
- State Board of Education
- Students in the Care of D.C. Coordinating Committee
- University of the District of Columbia

DC Council: Public Education Oversight

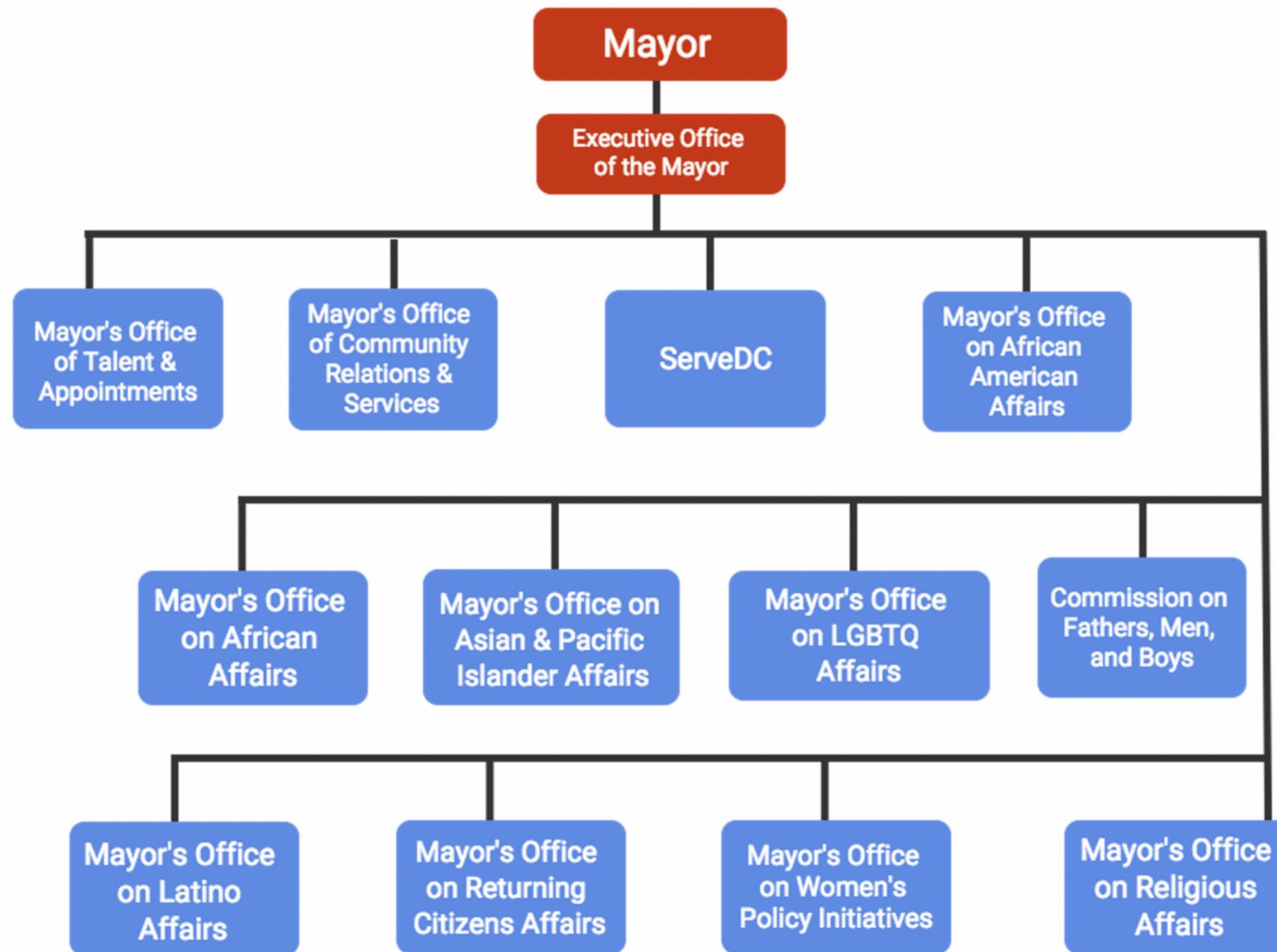


Areas of Government & Impact on Public Education



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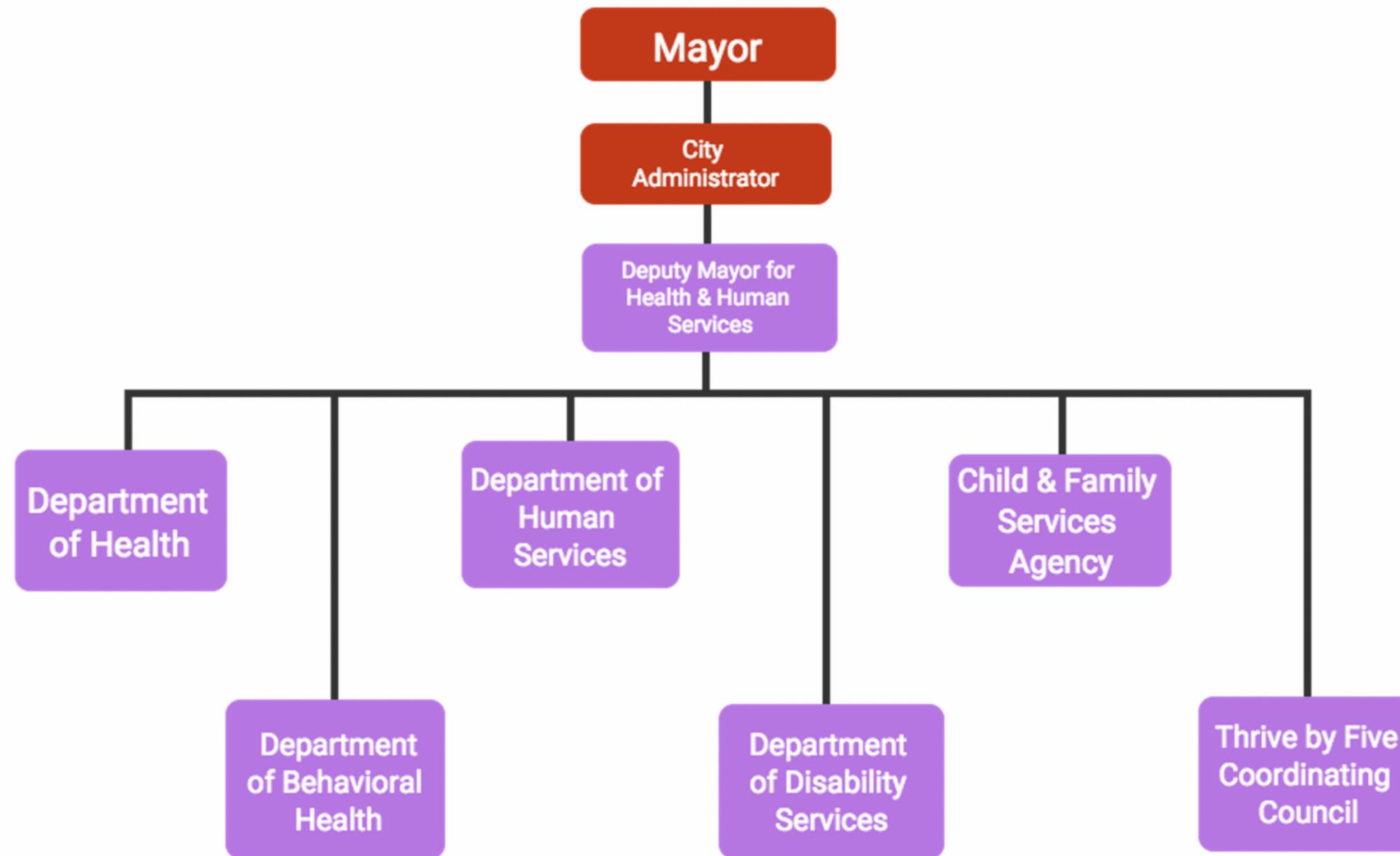
Executive Office of the Mayor



This graphic is not inclusive of all agencies and offices in this cluster. The agencies and offices listed have a direct impact or connection to public education.

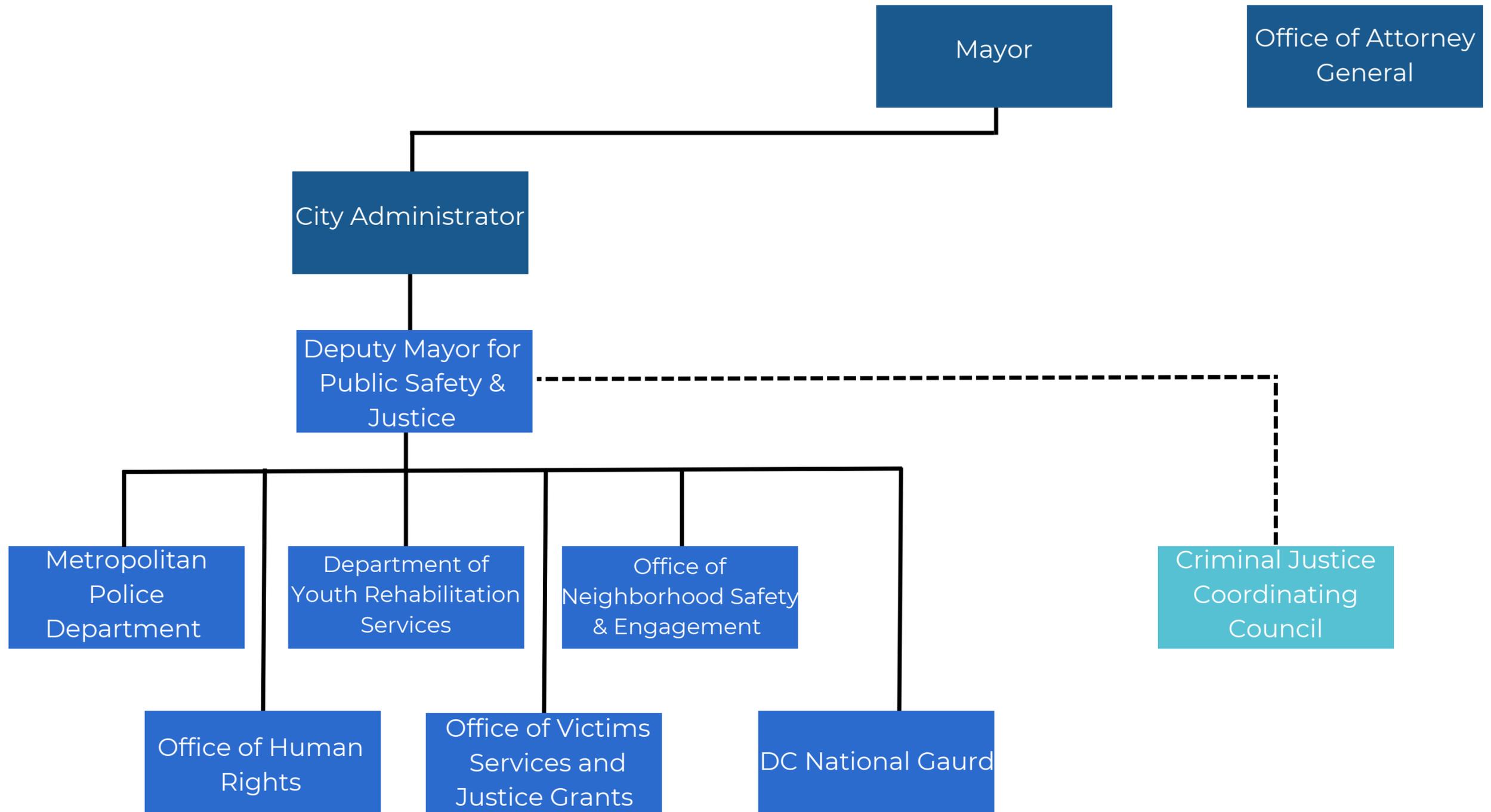


Health & Human Services



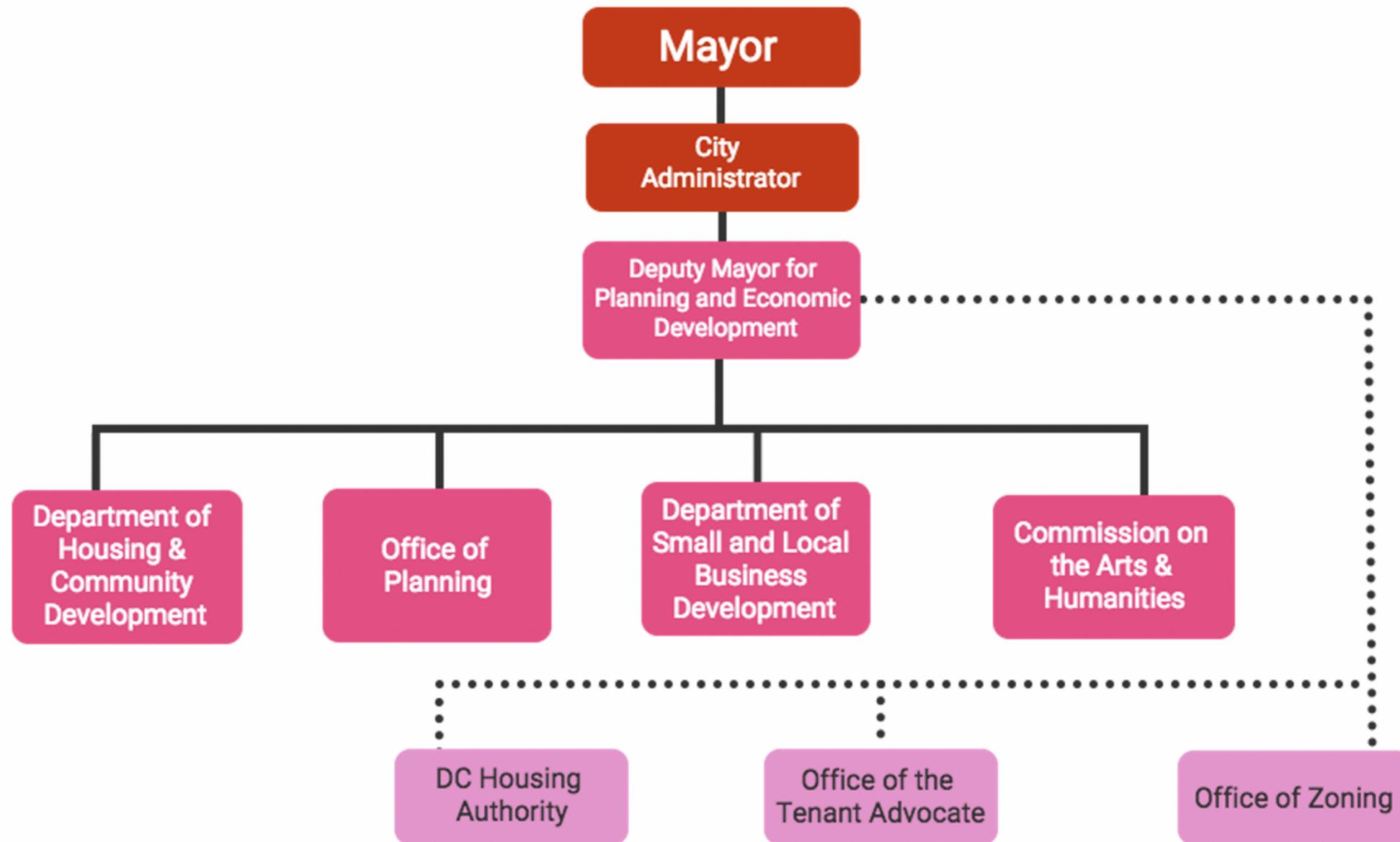
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Public Safety & Justice



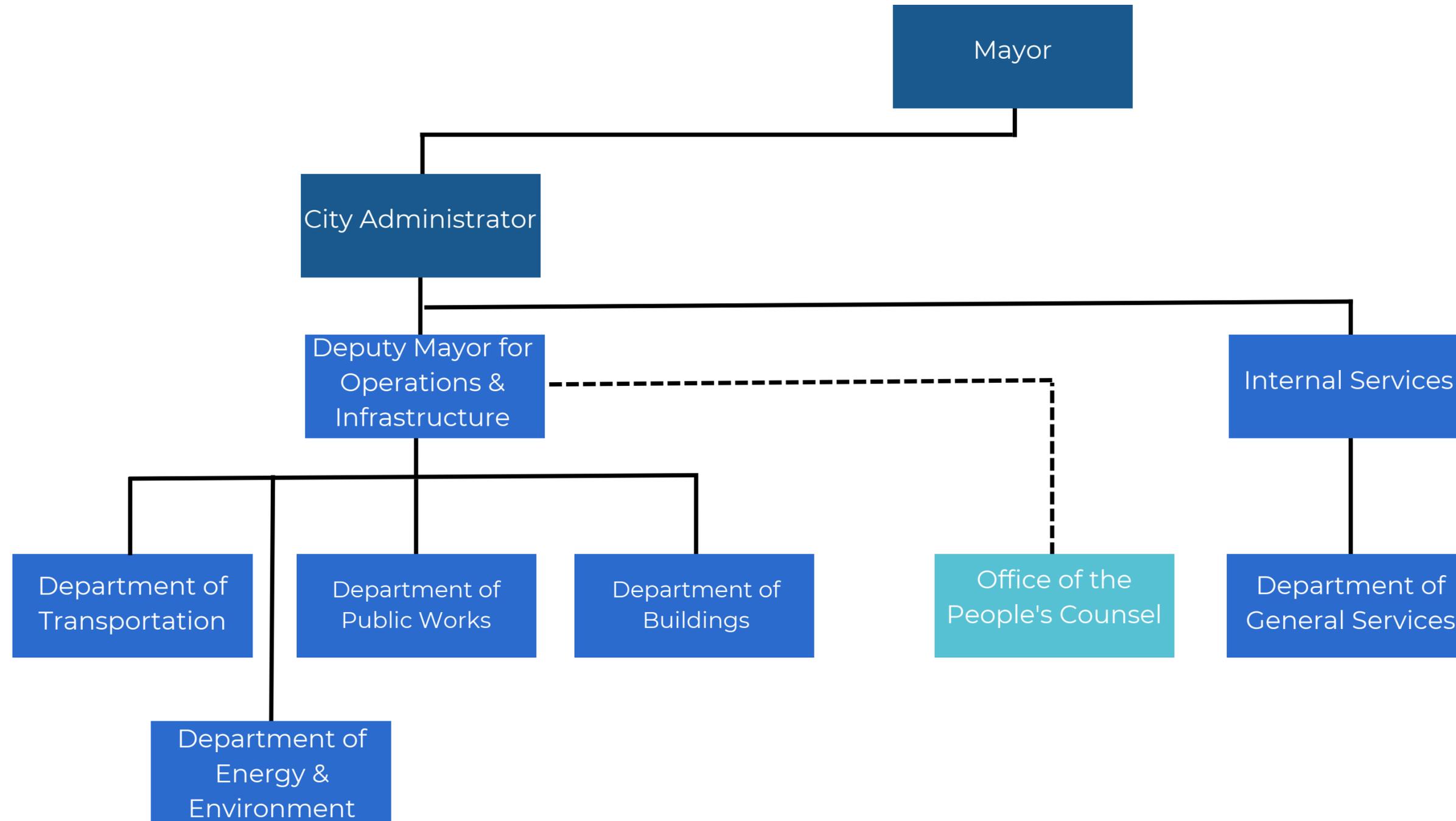
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Housing & Economic Development



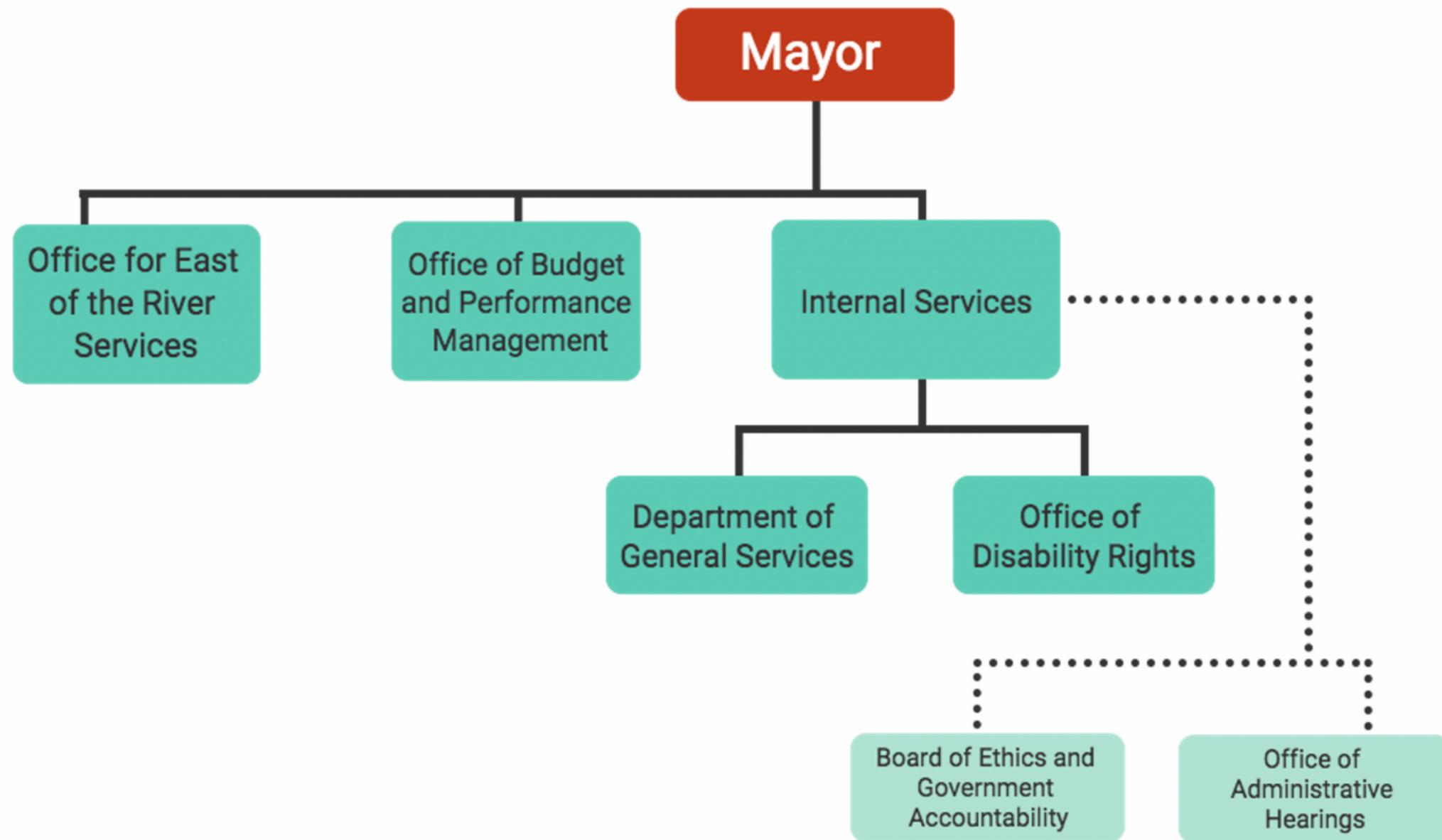
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Operation and Infrastructure



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Internal Services



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202.742.4692



student.advocate@dc.gov



studentadvocate.dc.gov



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